

Second JBS Conference

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this time, the bus will make a stop at the Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport. For those able to stay later there will be a tour of the American Swedish Institute with a short concert to be presented there by JBS member Kevin Carlson.

If you're on our mailing list, you can expect to get registration information by early April. If you haven't heard from us by then, please write to Mickey Dove (see Masthead for addresses). Now, by all means, continue to the next story . . .

An Excursion to Santa Fe, July 3–8

Several of us are planning to continue the fellowship generated during our conference, by extending our trip to include an excursion to Santa Fe, New Mexico, for two operas and some exploration of the superb state parks and museums dedicated to the local Indian history and culture. We'll see Verdi's *Falstaff* on July 4 (Fenton will be sung by Greg Turay, dubbed "the new Bjoerling" last spring by The New York Times) and *Lucia di Lammermoor* on July 6. The opera house there is perched in a natural bowl in the Tesuque hills, just outside of Santa Fe, and is partially open to the resplendent evening skies. (Even people who don't enjoy opera go there for its setting.) Productions are well known to be lavish and adventuresome, we can expect to enjoy the performances as well as the setting. Among those definitely planning to attend are Bertil Bengtsson and Elaine, Maria-Luisa and Enrique Gilardoni, Young So, Mati Zeiti and Gail and Dan Shea.

We have reservations at the Hotel St Francis on the central Plaza in town (a favorite smaller hotel, comfortable and inexpensive by Santa Fe standards), and for mid-priced opera tickets (\$60–80). If you think you'd like to join this excursion, call Mickey or Dan (check the masthead for addresses and phone numbers) as soon as possible to start planning.

(For some excellent information on our hotel, with links to all that is going on in Santa Fe, visit the website www.hotelstfrancis.com or www.santafeopera.org or, for camera buffs, photoartssantafe.com will tell you about a week-long program that starts on July 6.) ■

Some Perspectives on the "Editorial We"

Welcome to the Spring 2001 issue of this *Journal*, our latest experiment in producing a permanent "hard copy" record of what the Jussi Björling Societies are doing: Let's take a moment here to look ahead at some of the featured articles in this issue:

♦ We bring you an overview of JBS-USA's next conference, June 28–July 1 at Gustavus Adolphus College. We list the events of four very full days, and hope to tempt you to attend by describing the opportunities for many social interactions with fellow Jussi-cologists. And we have news of an additional post-conference trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico, for two operas and other excursions with your JBS comrades. We especially invite our British and Scandinavian comrades of the JBAS and JB Sällskapet to consider joining our Minnesota and New Mexico events.

♦ The extraordinary analysis by **Stephen Hastings** of Jussi's career, in "The Supreme Singing of a Shy Man," will give you much to ponder. You'll want to pull out your record collection, to keep up with Hastings' discussion. I especially liked his quote of Levi-Strauss, that "the invention of melody is the supreme mystery of mankind" and his opinion that "no tenor better than Björling enables us to understand the depth of that mystery."

These words remind me of other similar ideas that we've quoted in this *Journal*, for instance these of **Garrison Keillor** (in Issue 9): "none of [what was in the newspapers] had the slightest reality to me. What was most real was something missing from my life that was intimated in Great Music. I would look up from my desk to hear Jussi Bjoerling sing 'Nessun Dorma' from *Turandot* and suddenly know that my life lacked nobility and purpose . . ."

Then there was the statement of one music-lover (quoted in Issue 10), discussing the evolution of his own musical tastes, that "I suppose Björling has had more effect on my life than almost anyone else I have heard or anything I have read. One does not know just what it is that one learns from music... but I am sure one learns perhaps most of what one knows."

We're going to continue to do our best to attach Transcendental Meaning to your own personal enjoyment of great singing. We hope you don't mind!

[In fact: These same ideas surface again, in the comments by **Sir Andrew Davis** that we quote in this issue's "Jussi in the News" column. It's even possible that he makes the point better than anyone else, to date!]

♦ We are proud to bring you **Carla Ramsey's** insightful discussion of Beethoven's great song "Adelaide" and her analysis of Jussi's interpretations in the four known recordings he left us. Personally, this *Lied* always has fascinated me, especially as sung by Jussi, but I found the poem's ideas puzzling and even more so, the variety of musical technique used by Beethoven. Now Carla has supplied just the discussion I've needed, and we hope you'll find it useful too.

We are pleased to introduce Carla to you in a special *Spotlight* article, and to announce that she will be helping us produce our "Jussi in the News" column.

♦ We bring you news of current events of mutual interest: In fact, there is so much news that even we are astonished, at times, by the extent of interest in our tenor! Technology changes, but the Björling voice continues to fascinate new audiences. We try to report on the most interesting new developments:

In this issue's "The Recorded Legacy" record-reviews column, we mention some new issues of Björling recordings (including a newly-discovered item: an English-language version of Schubert's "Die Allmacht" from 1946). But it's hard to keep up with all the new issues, even with the active help of Harald Henrysson and the Borlänge Museum. (Luckily, help is on the way: our column also tells that **Hal Sokolsky** has agreed to take over as Recordings Editor, in the next issue of this *Journal*.)

Also to be reported here: a new medallion of Jussi created by noted graphic artist **Marika Somogyi**, and minted in the Jussian metal, silver. We expect this to be on display at the June conference in Minnesota.

Leonard Warren was part of RCA's "dream team," with Jussi and Zinka Milanov, for recordings made during the 1950s; thus we're especially pleased to bring you Bill Clayton's review of Mary Jane Phillips-Matz' new Warren biography.

Appropriately, this issue also brings you the transcription of **George Jellinek's** 1987 radio interview of **Richard Mohr**, who produced many of RCA's opera sets at the start of the LP era. You'll enjoy his perspective of his artists' personalities: dreamy voices, but perhaps not so much a "team"!

♦ We bring you some articles that may be new to you, like **Alfred Gardner's** description of Jussi's tour of South Africa during late summer 1954, written for the JB Appreciation Society's *Newsletter* and first published in June 1988. Many thanks to **Eric Wimbles** of the JBAS for sending this along to us to reprint in this *Journal*. Eric suggests that this article is a useful adjunct to the "South Africa" chapter in *Jussi*, supplying much extra detail.

♦ Once again **Gail Campaign** has translated more chapters from Bertil Hagman's *Minnesbok (Memory Book)*. We thank her again for her fine work, and look forward to her next effort on our behalf: for our fall issue, she plans to translate a long article from the JB Sällskapet's *Tidning* by **Bertil Bengtsson**, on Jussi's slave-years for the Royal Operan during the early 1930s.

♦ We are especially pleased to bring you a fine translation, by **Karl and Toby Hekler**, of **Jürgen Kesting's** article "Mit dem Herzen Singen." This insightful tribute to Jussi, from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, not only served as an homage on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of his death, but it also sounds an alarm—reawakening us to RCA/BMG's typically shoddy packaging practices in its

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Some Perspectives on the "Editorial We"

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reissues like "The Ultimate Collection" of items recorded by Jussi during the 1950s. Even worse, as Kesting clearly points out, the Björling sound is hardened, and otherwise abused, by the transcription engineers.

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Now we can address the question suggested by our title: just who makes up the "editorial We" that produces this *Journal*? I urge you to consult the acknowledgements that follow the articles themselves, which often mention not only the authors but also considerable help provided by our members. For another indication of the breadth of this support, check the Masthead on page 2: Here we try to acknowledge the team of experts who translate some articles, check others for errors, etc. We know that this list is not complete, and if you wish to volunteer your services too, please let us know!

Finally, we especially want to thank the Borlänge Museum's **Harald Henrysson** for his generous sharing of Jussi-news from around the world. We constantly depend on his connections with Jussiphiles worldwide, as well as his linguistic and organizational talents. Recently he and his assistant **Deborah Clemons** have promised to help us put together a story on his museum's new educational program for Swedish schoolchildren, a story that I hope will give us some good ideas on how we—ourselves—can help bring more classical vocal music to our own local schools.

In particular, we look forward to learning more about members of JBAS and the JB Sällskapet, and helping share this information with you. As is clear from some new polls cited in our column "Jussi in the News," the Björling voice is still very much welcomed by British radio listeners. Can our JBAS friends help explain to us this special prominence of Jussi in their country?

In another direction, I'm putting this issue together later than scheduled, and in a bit of a rush. I apologize for some of this, and hope that after January 2002 (when I retire from my "day job" at the University of Wisconsin), I'll have more time for JBS work.

Observe that this issue has a generous number of detailed articles—but where are the photographs that should accompany the words? Be assured that the lack is temporary; we intend to find and use many appropriate illustrations with each future issue. In fact, some technical problems and time-pressure stymied our wish to bring you some interesting photos submitted by **Andrew Farkas** for this issue. For the future, we are pleased to tell you that **Bob Tuggle** at the Metropolitan Opera Archives and **Harald Henrysson** at the Borlänge Museum both have offered to make available digital copies of Björling-related material from their files.

We'd hoped to bring you Hal Sokolsky's transcription of a 1962 WNYC interview by Walter Stegman of Jussi's publicity agent **Bill Arneith**, but will have to delay that for lack of space here. Also postponed is a lengthy "Homage to Jussi Björling" from the Austrian music magazine *Der neue Merker*, again carefully translated for you by Karl and Toby Hekler.

We also regret having to delay several interviews of frequent contributors to these pages: in a future issue, **Kristian Krogholm** will introduce us to Ancona's vocal maven Alessandro Sciocchetti, and we will introduce you to Norway's Kristian as well as Israel's **Mati Zeiti** and Baltimore impresario **Harry Baernstein III**. And Bill Clayton's review of the music database CLASSICAT may help you bring order to your record collection—look for that in a future issue (in the meantime, check our JBS website: we may post some of these articles there).

You'll notice that this issue does have many professional touches—which come to us via the expertise of our present fine publisher, A-R Editions of Madison. We hope we can continue to take advantage of their services, but that will depend in part on the level of support that you provide us with, as well as the rate at which we're able to grow. We're hoping that our upcoming conference will provide us with the visibility we need to attract many **new members**. In the meantime, please **consider recruiting** another member for our Society, or making a **special gift** to JBS-USA, to help us make the jump to a higher level, with a broader base of members and better publications and programs. Thanks again for your continued support, at this exciting time in our development!

—Dan Shea